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Directions

TO THOSE WHO RAISE TOBACCO IN THIS PROVINCE.

"Of all the plants known to the writer, tobacco is constituted and composed of the richest, strongest and most delicious, and also the most delightful ingredients. Tho alcohol or spirit, the oil and opium, the sugar or saccharine matter, the mucilaginous wax and gums, the acids and nitre, with several other volatile salts, etc. all so harmoniously combined, constitute this the richest and most delicious compound ever engendered and generated in any one plant. No wonder then that all classes of every country and clime, from the savage to the civilized part of mankind, should take delight in its use. It forms the traveller's companion, and the Philosopher's aid. It is the old bachelor's antidote; the epicure's last resort, & the sailor's & soldier's third daily ration. It keeps open the sentinel's eyes—and besides medical and many other good effects, it cheers the watchman in the silence of the night.—Wonderful weed of American origin!!!



APR 26 1941

Tobacco.

As Tobacco is the staple production of the soil, that is to raise money on in the southern part of Maryland where I came from, every person there making more or less of it, I expect that I can give better directions about the culture, and management of Tobacco than most of the people in this country. And though I am a stranger here, yet I feel much interested in the raising of Tobacco and will give all the information that lies in my power.—The following are a few observations, which I submit to all those who are any way concerned in raising of Tobacco, from the time that the seed is sown, until it is put in the hogshead.

Of ground suitable for Tobacco.

The ground that is intended for Tobacco ought to be a rich, light, sandy loam; if it has a clayey

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bottom so much the better.—An argillaceous or clayey soil does not do so well for it, as in the latter soil it grows much slower, and is not of as good quality as in the former.

Ploughing &c.

Having fixed on the proper soil for planting Tobacco, the land ought if possible to be flushed up sometime in the latter part of October, or the first week or ten days in November, this answers many valuable purposes, it is an effectual remedy against the grub worm, a great enemy to young plants of many kinds, particularly of Tobacco; the frost meliorates the soil, it dissolves clods, and greatly assists in pulverising the ground.

Of the Plant Beds.

The ground intended for Tobacco beds ought to be very rich, and lay in a dry place, for too much moisture does not answer for the young plants: it ought to be well burnt, and carefully dug up, and all the roots and clods must be taken out, for it cannot be too often hinted to the planter, that the less clods &c. that he has in his land, the better every thing grows that he puts in it.---Burning the ground is necessary on many accounts, for it is generally observed, that all kinds of vegetables grow best on earth that has been well scorched by the fire, it also kills many seeds of the weeds and grasses that otherwise would infest the Tobacco plants. Of the quantity of seed that ought to be sown in the beds, it must be left to every man's own judgment and experience, if the plants are too thick in the beds, they grow spindling, and are so tender that without the best of seasons, they are apt to die when transplanted.

Of preparing ground for planting, distance of one plant from another &c.

The land that is intended for Tobacco, ought to be ploughed up as early in the spring as circumstances will permit, then to be well rolled and raked, for it is a maxim with husbandmen, that the better the land is pulverised "the better every thing grows that is put in it."—In Maryland they generally give about three feet distance from one plant to another, but where the land is very rich, a little more, and as the land is much richer in this province, (particularly on the River Thames,) than it is in any part of Maryland where they raise Tobacco, I think the plants ought to be at least from three feet two inches to three feet four inches apart. It must be obvious to every person, who ever paid any attention to the subject, how badly a plant grows in the shade, of course when Tobacco is planted too close, one half of the leaves on the stalk are robbed of a due proportion of light and air, and all the lower leaves will be thin and chaffy. I would advise the intelligent planter to make experiments, and on soils of equal strength to plant some Tobacco at three feet apart and some at three feet four inches, he will then be better able to judge which is best.

Of the cultivation of Tobacco.

We will now suppose the Tobacco planted and growing, but little hoe work is necessary.---In Maryland where men have level land to work and but few hands to do it, their Tobacco is weeded out with the hoe, they afterwards cultivate it with the plough, and indeed in new hilly land after their Tobacco is weeded out (provided their land is rich)

they seldom use the hoe after, without it be to chop up the weeds, and scions that grow up from the sapling stumps, for the planters have the slovenly practice of leaving the stumps of all sizes standing in the ground.---The plough that is used to cultivate Tobacco with, is very small, I believe there are but few of them in this country, but I suppose they might be had if wanted: they ought to be so small as to admit their being run three times in a row.---The planters in this province have the advantage of the Marylanders in making of Tobacco, the reason is this, the land is so much richer here than it is in Maryland, which causes the Tobacco to grow so fast, that the planter has no chance to work his Tobacco long, either with the hoe or plough; the planter here is also exempt from the horn worm, that everlasting pest, almost from the time that the Tobacco is planted, till it is put in the house, they require the utmost assiduity to keep them under, yet notwithstanding the greatest vigilance, every planter in Maryland loses more or less by them.

Of Breaking off the tops and suckers.

No precise rule can be laid down for breaking off the tops of Tobacco, various kinds requiring to be broke off at different heights: generally the tops ought to be broke off low enough to allow the top leaves to get their full growth, then they will get ripe as soon as the lower ones: if the tops are broke off too high the top leaves will not get ripe, of course when the Tobacco is stript, the lower leaves will be of a good colour, and the top ones will cure green, and ought by no means to be tied up in the bundles with the others, but of this more hereafter.---The suckers ought to be broken off early,

for if they grow too long they rob the leaves of too much substance, which makes them thin and chafy, the first crop of suckers consists of only four or five sprouts, the second crop generally comes out from the top of the stalk to the bottom, and they ought to be broken off early, for if they be suffered to grow too long, they not only impoverish the leaf, but endanger the breaking it off with the sucker. If the weather was to continue always dry, it would not make much difference how open a house was to cure Tobacco in, provided it would keep the dew off, but as we live in a climate where rainy spells of weather are frequent, the houses that Tobacco is put in, ought not only to keep the rain off, but the damp air too. If the house that Tobacco is cured in has an earthen floor, the planter will find it very convenient on account of getting his Tobacco in order when he goes to packing, of this more hereafter.---When the Tobacco is ripe, it ought to be cut as soon as possible, for it gets nothing by staying in the ground, but on the contrary, it is liable to many accidents, such as rainy spells of weather, high winds, hail storms, &c.

Of cutting Tobacco.

When Tobacco is ripe enough to be cut, it may be known by the texture of the leaves, they feel firmer than those that are green, and have a curly appearance, and in light sandy land the leaves actually change their colour when they are nearly ripe, from a deep to a light green, bordering on yellow, generally two or three days after the second crop of suckers are broke off, the Tobacco is ripe enough to cut: before cutting, the stalk ought

to be split with a knife made for the purpose within three or four inches of the ground, this is a much better way than to peg the Tobacco, for, when it is split it sets much better on the sticks, cures or dries quicker, and of course has a better colour, than when it is hung on pegs.

When the Tobacco is cut down, it ought to be moved as soon as possible to the house and hung up, for if the leaves get too much withered, they are apt to stick together and house burn, or rot before they can dry; the best way to manage when the Tobacco is withered too much, is before the stickfull is hung up in the house, for a man to take both ends of the stick in his hands, and swing the plants backward and forward quickly two or three times, then immediately hang it up in the house; generally this will separate the leaves, but when the Tobacco has lain too long after being cut, nothing will effectually separate them, some will be lost. The best way to prevent the leaves sticking together, is as I said above, to carry the Tobacco to the house as soon as possible after it is cut down, if by this method, a few more leaves break off, never mind it, the industrious planter will not lose them, but have some small sticks made round for the purpose, split the thick end of the stem and hang his leaves on these sticks, where they will quickly dry, and be of as good a colour as those on the stalk.

Of hanging the Tobacco up in the House.

The sticks of Tobacco ought not to have too many plants on them, nor be hung too close together in the house, for if they are, it does not cure of so good a colour, and is also liable to be house

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burnt or to rot, particularly if there comes a wet spell of weather while the Tobacco is drying, the stems are apt to rot and fall off the stalks.

Of stripping Tobacco.

The Tobacco ought to be well cured or dried before it is split, for if there be any swelled stems tied up in the bundles, the head will be sure to rot, of course no Tobacco in that state will be suitable for a foreign market. After the Tobacco is well dried, the sooner it is stript the better, for it has been observed by the best of judges, that every time Tobacco gets damp and dries again, it not only loses its colour but some of its weight also.— When the season comes, and the planter begins to strip his Tobacco, he ought to cull off all the ground leaves that are not good, and all the top leaves that did not get ripe in the field, and are cured green: any leaves on the stalk that are house burnt or bruised, must be all taken off and tied up separat this is called second Tobacco, and must be packed in separate hogsheads. All the good Tobacco must be tied up and bulked by itself, and is called Crop Tobacco.

Of Bulking Tobacco.

The planter ought to be careful about bulking his Tobacco, for it rarely happens when a season is ended that the Tobacco is in order to bulk, generally it is too damp; if it be kneed down in a bulk in this state, it will be sure to rot when the warm weather comes in the spring. The best way when Tobacco is too damp, is, if the planter has plenty of house room, as soon as the Tobacco is stript, to put it on sticks and hang it up in the house, there let it stay until it gets completely dry. The planter

who wants to make nice Tobacco must now watch it with the utmost vigilance, as soon as the leaf gets moist enough to bear pressing together in the hand without crumbling, and the stem still brittle, it ought to be immediately thrown down: in this state the planter may knee it down in a large double bulk, it will never spoil. A bulk put up in this way, ought not to be broke until the last of May or the first of June, and then the planter will be really surprised at the fragrant smell that his Tobacco will have.---If the planter has not the room necessary to manage his Tobacco as I have above directed, and it is too moist to put away in bulk, he may take it and lay it in what is called wind rows, that is, lay the bundles down lightly in rows with the heads different ways, and let the tail ends lap over one another a few inches, he may then continue to lay on his bundles until his wind row gets about 18 or 20 inches high, which is enough when the Tobacco is very damp, these wind rows will soon get dry through, and ought not to lay any longer than circumstances will permit, as the Tobacco will not condition, or get its sweet smell while it lays in these rows, as soon as the planter has house room sufficient and a damp spell of weather comes, he ought to throw out his wind rows and get the Tobacco in order, put it on sticks, hang it up in the house, and manage it every way as I have above directed.

Of the Casks to put Tobacco in.

The hogsheads that are intended for Tobacco ought to be made with staves, four feet one inch long, and thirty-six or thirty-seven inches across the diameter of the head, the staves and heading

ought to be well seasoned. No nails ought to go through the hoops into the cask, for when the Tobacco is inspected all the hoops on one head must be taken off. The hoops ought to be made of very tough wood, I believe young white oak, or white ash make the best. One nail with three wooden pins to a hoop is sufficient, the wood for the pins must be tough, make them one fourth of an inch square, and to be drove into a hole, one fourth of an inch in diameter, they ought to go through the hoop three eighths of an inch, and to be beat down as you would an iron rivet. The pin ought to be left three eighths of an inch long outside of the hoop, and being somewhat larger on the outside end, it never can draw out. The head ought to be well secured, with what we call lining, this is a withe of some tough wood, about one inch in diameter, made flat on two sides, to be bent all round the top of the head, and to be strongly nailed to the ends of the staves and head hoop. Before the planter begins packing, he ought to secure the bottom head of his hogshead, by driving a nail through the withe into every stave all round: these nails ought to go through the hoop and be clenched on the outside. There is no occasion for being so particular with the top head, a nail through the withe into every third or fourth stave will do, for when it is inspected, the head and top hoops are all taken off, but when the Tobacco is inspected, it ought to be the inspector's duty to see that the top head is secured the same way that I have directed the planter to proceed with the bottom head.

Of packing Tobacco.

This is a nice job, or rather the preparing the

Tobacco to pack, for on this depends the grower's character, of being a nice, or a slovenly planter.-- If the planter has followed my directions about bulking, it is probable that he has plenty of Tobacco to pack, all in nice condition: for when large bulks are made in the order that I directed, if opened the last of May or first of June, the greatest part of them will be in good order to pack, but if it should happen that his bulks are dried through, he must get his Tobacco in order as well as he can: this is done various ways, by spreading it on the tobacco house floor, by hanging it up in the house, in damp spells of weather, this is the best way, and by laying it out on the dewy grass early in the morning, by all these methods Tobacco may be got in order to pack, but the planter must be very watchful that his Tobacco does not get too damp: the proper order for it to be in, is this, for the leaf to be in such order that it will bear to be pressed together in the hand without crumbling, and at the same time the stem brittle, a bundle of such Tobacco, a man may take up in his hand, and turn the tail ends of the leaves upwards, the leaves will all stand up: Tobacco in this order, may be packed and sent to any part of the world, it will never spoil. The manner of placing the Tobacco in the hogshead, must be left to every man's own judgment, only this, when the planter is packing he ought to see that no crooked or crumpled leaves go into his hogshead, every leaf ought to lay straight.

MISCELLANEOUS.

I have said that the Tobacco beds ought not to be sown too thick, the planter had better run the

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risk of having his beds too thin, and have more of them, for if a plant be taken out of the thick bed, and at the same time take one (that we call a rose plant) out of the thin bed, and plant them both at the same time, the tender plant is very apt to die, the rose plant is almost certain to live, and will grow up in a short time after it is transplanted; the first clear day that comes, the Sun will kill all the leaves on the tender plant, and leave nothing but the bud alive, from which circumstance the planter may calculate, that one will get its growth at least three weeks before the other. After the planter has cut his Tobacco down he ought to be very careful in handling of it, and not suffer it to be bruised; the cart ought to be unloaded the same way that it was loaded; if carried to the house on mens shoulders, they must lay their turns down easy, not throw them down like a log of wood. Again, the Tobacco when carried to the house must be laid thin, for if put in large heaps it is very apt to heat, and rot. Green Tobacco that heats, is irretrievably lost—The planter when he is culling his Tobacco, must not suppose that all the bottom leaves are suitable for trash or second Tobacco, there are very often leaves attached to the lower end of the stalk, that have lain a long time on the ground and are rotten, such must be thrown away; for the second Tobacco has to be inspected, as well as the good, and must be prepared for packing the same way as the good, only this, there is no occasion for the planters being so particular with the second as the good, it does not heat so quick in bulk as the good, but it will heat if it be bulked down too moist; it ought to be the first that is packed. Being no part of a cooper, and ignorant of the technical terms of the

different parts of a cask, I am fearful that I have not been perspicuous enough, in my directions about the lining of a hogshead head. Such of my readers as have seen how the head of a hogshead of sugar is secured, will easily understand me, this lining is very necessary, it secures the head and keeps it in place, it saves the ends of the staves from the sailor's apparatus when the Tobacco is hoisted into his boat, and whoever considers the number of times that a hogshead of Tobacco has to be hoisted in and out of boats between this (Detroit River) and Montreal will not be surprised that I have been so particular about securing the head so well. When the planter is packing his Tobacco he ought to let his bundles go into the hogshead with the leaves all spread out, as they came out of the bulk, this makes the Tobacco look very pretty when it is inspected, and is much admired in the European Markets.

Having given the planters all the information that is necessary, in the culture and management of their Tobacco, I hope they will put in practice the directions that I have given them in the preceding pages, for I can assure the planters here in Upper Canada, that the method I have recommended to them is acted on with success, by the greatest planters in the States.

I shall only add, that I hope to see the day, when large fields of Tobacco will be seen growing in every part of this fine country, and what will make it yet more agreeable to the philanthropist, will be this, he will know that no miserable gangs of slaves toiled in these fields, but that they were cultivated by the hands of Freemen.

CHARLES C. MELVIN.

Sandwich, December 12th, 1827.

Extracts

"I have imported quality cannot price. handled to cont ought t suitable the gro on the accom the ma your fi attent the co some be hun fire to short that o will t factur for T Britis 9d. p I her here, very duce this

Extracts from Letters received from London, relative to Canada Tobacco.

24th August 1827.

"I have examined the 2 hogsheads of Tobacco imported from Montreal in the St. Charles, the quality proves very ordinary, and this description cannot be sold here for home consumption at any price. The Tobacco must be well cured, neatly handled, and not too hard prized into the hogshead: to contain the weight of the hogsheads, the casks ought to be at least one third larger, but the most suitable sized packages are those of about 450 lbs. the gross tare and net weight to be legibly marked on the end of each cask, and each shipment to be accompanied with a certificate of origin, specifying the marks and numbers of the casks. In writing to your friends, I would recommend their particular attention to stemming the following descriptions, the colour to be light, the leaf light and dry, with some flavour, and after stemming the Tobacco to be hung up to dry, and in case of any moisture a fire to be kept in the stemming house at night, in short the great secret for the shippers to know is, that our manufacturers, can only use Tobacco that will take an increase of 10 to 20 per cent in manufacturing. I could at all times obtain a high price for Tobacco of this description, imported from the British Colonies, as it is admitted on a duty of 2s. 9d. per lb while other descriptions pay 3s. per lb. I herewith send you samples of what we require here, and if the planters have not got Virginia, or very good Kentucky seed, I fear they cannot produce the quality required for the consumption of this country. Tobacco equal to the samples will

WELVIN.

sell at 5½d to 6 pence per lb. the stalks which are taken from the Tobacco generally sell for about a dollar and a half per cwt. for Germany and Holland, and the loss in weight I consider about one third, and the expence of stemming about one dollar per 100 lbs.

(Signed) J. MACKENZIE."

"We are afraid it may be sometime before the necessary precaution will be taken to make the growth of U. Canada suitable for this market, but there cannot be a doubt, we are assured, by people who have seen the 2 Hhds. per St Charles, that the climate and soil which produce such strength and quality, can with aid of skilful management, bring finer qualities to perfection."

29th Sept. 1827.

Yesterday we finished in company with a good judge, a broker well known to us, a careful examination of the Tobacco received per Dew Drop. The whole is far too lightly prized into the casks which contain one third more than they ought to do, and the article is materially injured, the leaf will hardly open, and gets pulled in pieces when the hands are separated, and if any sap remained in the stem it is squeezed out, injures the colour of the leaf and frequently produces rot: we confirm all that has been already written in respect to stemming, curing, and packing, and now add that the soil in which the mark K was raised, will produce excellent Tobacco, when properly managed, and such as will suit this market well, but the present parcel is not sufficiently dry, too dull coloured, and the quality

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various in the same cask. Cask L. G. G. was of pretty good colour G. M. M. was better, but part not quite cured, and J. G. □ A. was decidedly the best, in every respect, being originally of good quality, well cured; the colour more near what is wanted, and if anything not quite so tightly prized, the butt ends are rather less bulky than those of the other hands: we have further to remark that several of the casks marked K were considerably damaged, one only by sea water, every cask should be carefully examined before shipment, to detect any country damage, as the first thing done on receipt here is to turn the contents out of the cask to weigh, and if any damp or wet appears, the chopping knife is very smartly applied, the loss from this cause, in the present instance, will be serious. Cask, L. G. G.—G. M. M. and J. □ G. were quite sound: we shall be able to write more particularly of the different qualities after shewing the samples to the trade.

6th October 1827.

In our last we gave you our report at full length, on the Tobacco received per Dew Drop, as it appeared on opening, the samples have since been shewn to many in the trade, and the following is the report of the broker upon them.

K. 9 casks, are strong coarse tobacco, very moist and badly handled, they resemble such as we formerly imported from New Orleans, and I suspect are from Kentucky seed, the land upon which these were produced, I am confident will yield fine good tobacco.

T. P. 7 casks, all of very ordinary quality and damaged.

D. P. 3 casks of the same quality as T. P. these 10 hogsheads are much inferior to the K. mark, and must have been the produce of inferior soil.

I. □ G. A. N^o. 19--part of this hhd. is very good and had it been properly cured and stemmed would have sold here at a good price.

L. G. G. N^o. 10—not quite so good as preceding hogshead.

M. N^o. 10 }

G. M. }

M. N^o. 11 }

} very ordinary and part damaged.

HR. & Co.—part of this hhd. is very good for stemming, and part decayed for want of proper curing.

“In short there is not a single hogshead in the parcel fit for home consumption, even 6 per cent would not compensate a manufacturer for the loss he would sustain from the bad condition of the Tobacco.”



YORK :

Printed by W. L. Mackenzie, at the Office of the
Colonial Advocate.

1823.

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